

MEMORIAL

OF

THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

OF THE

CITY OF MOBILE,

Praying the grant of certain unlocated Lands belonging to the United States, within the limits of the City.

DECEMBER 29, 1820.

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THE NATION AND THE WORLD

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MEMORIAL.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:-

The memorial and petition of the mayor and aldermen of the city of Mobile respectfully sheweth, That the city is unfortunately destitute of almost every kind of building necessary for public purposes, and without the means for improvement, except such as are derived from taxes upon individual property; that the only public buildings in the city, when taken possession of by the American government (excepting the Catholic church,) have been held as the property of the United States. Those buildings are the public bakehouse and hospital; the city also enjoyed the use and benefit of certain ungranted land within its limits, under each of the former governments, which have been recently surveyed; and it is with painful regret we have observed that the same are now offered for sale. Thus the city is about to be forever deprived of the most valuable part of the lands, which heretofore remained ungranted for the common use of the city.

It is with much concern we behold the city destitute of even a lot upon which to place a school house or a church, a court house or a prison. Knowing the liberal grants made to the city of New Orleans, under circumstances not half so necessitous, we fondly hope, that Mobile, the natural depot for the productions and the imports of the growing state of Alabama, would participate of the bounty of the government, besides the expectation very naturally arising from the liberal policy of the government to the state, to public institutions and to other cities, we firmly believe that Mobile was the only city in the Union which presented so many claims to the fostering care of the government, whether considered in relation to her increasing commercial importance, her prominent and exposed position, as a weak and vulnerable point, at which even the integrity of the Union might be assailed, or to her recent calamitous sufferings by storms, by pestilence, and by fire.

The inhabitants of Mobile have long struggled with embarrassments for want of public funds, and have hoped that the bounty of the government would afford them relief by a liberal donation of public land within their limits, whenever the same might be duly ascertained and surveyed. Since the survey has been completed it is somewhat remarkable, that none of our citizens are yet acquainted with the ex-

act plan and extent of it; it is supposed, however, to embrace much more than the site of Fort Charlotte, and by far the greatest and most valuable portion of the public ground within the city.

As this land is now offered for sale and will shortly become individual property, your petitioners most respectfully pray your honorable bodies to take into consideration their necessitous situation, and to grant to the corporation of the city the remaining public lands within its limits, particularly the lots known as the hospital and bake house lots, containing about three fourths of an acre of ground; they further solicit, that the claim of the United States, if any, to certain ground, between high-water mark and the channel of the river Mobile, in front of the town, may be also invested in the corporation of the city of Mobile, as far as may be consistent with private claims. That the use of this ground, often covered by tide water, should be under the control of the corporation, is highly important to the future health and prosperity of the city. Individuals owning lots upon the river have claimed a right to this property, and buildings (improperly constructed) are erected upon it. Its present situation is dangerous to the health of the city; it requires to be filled up with wholesome materials; the expense of a proper foundation for a building upon it is so great that assurance of quiet possession is necessary to be guaranteed to warrant the improvement. Hence, while conflicting claims exist, the health of the city will be endangered. All the property your petitioners now pray for is comparatively of little value to the United States, but of inestimable importance to this commercial emporium of Alabama. Here, in the future progressive improvement of the country, an immense commerce must flow; here a great city will arise, though the means for improvements may be wrung from the hands of industry; though thousands may be sent to a premature grave for the want of early funds in the corporation for healthy improvements. As a community we have long endured, and must still endure, privations and sufferings, unless relieved by the protecting care of the government.

We repeat that the city is destitute of public funds, destitute of all public property. Surely the Congress, in view of the liberal donations to New Orleans, the wealthiest city of its size in the Union, will not deny to Mobile, under all the circumstances of her sufferings and calamities, a generous portion of the ungranted lands within the city.

ADDIN LEWIS, *Mayor.*

D'QUE. SALLE, *junr.*

EDWD. HALL,

HENRY V. CHAMBERLAIN,

PHILIP M'LOSKEY,

J. WOODWARD,

LEWIS JUDSON,

} *Aldermen.*

CITY OF MOBILE, *November 27, 1820.*